



University of Minnesota

Human Rights Center

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Annual Update and Factsheet, December 2006



The Human Rights Center works locally, nationally, and internationally to provide training, educational materials, and assistance to professionals, students, and volunteers working to promote and protect human rights. Inside, you will learn about our programming and what we have accomplished this year.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Human Rights Library

<http://www.umn.edu/humanrts>

The online University of Minnesota Human Rights Library makes available one of the largest human rights collections in the world, housing more than 25,000 core human rights documents, including several hundred human rights treaties, court decisions and other interpretive materials. The site also provides more than 4,000 links and a unique search device for multiple human rights sites. Documents are available in eight languages - Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Japanese, Russian, Spanish, and Swedish.

The Human Rights Library has made much progress in 2006, especially in its Arabic, Chinese, and Russian language alcoves.

As always, we have updated the Library with pertinent human rights documentation as it is released by the UN and other intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations. We are delighted to report that the Library has serviced over 2,000,000 individual users, who made over 31 million hits in 2006.

Some key highlights from 2006:

- The Library is now also available in a **Personal Data Assistant (PDA)/Mobile-friendly format** to accommodate

users of such devices. Since PDAs and Blackberry devices are the prevalent method of internet access in many places in the world, most notably China, Japan and Taiwan, this development is significant.

▪ A powerful new human rights research tool, entitled **Resources for Researching Country Conditions**, allows users to quickly and easily find human rights documentation on specific countries. Researchers are continuing to develop the country summaries, which include:

- Legal Structure
- Ratification of Treaties
- Institutions

- Reports (governmental, nongovernmental, and intergovernmental)
- Media
- Appropriate language links

While this section is still a work in progress, we have already developed some successful models relating to Argentina, Ethiopia, Russia, and Sri Lanka, with many more currently in development.

▪ The **Arabic Human Rights Library** has experienced substantial growth and now accounts for one-third of all users of the Human Rights Library. Two key developments in 2006 include: (1) The addition of Arabic-language documents

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This is My Home 2006 Quickfacts

- Nearly 1,800 online program registrants since Nov 2005, including over 1,200 from Minnesota
- Registrants from 65 countries and nearly all 50 states
- Over 1,300 Toolkits have been distributed to MN educators
- 12 training sessions for educators conducted in various parts of Minnesota
- 18 presentations for diverse community groups throughout Minnesota, reaching over 800 people



This is My Home

easily accessible Minnesota statewide K-12 Human Rights Education curriculum. The website is creating an online community of teachers, students, parents, and other community partners dedicated to advancing human rights education by sharing ideas, lessons, and best practices (www.thisismyhome.org).

Launched in 2005 with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights, *This is My Home* has continued to expand by leaps and bounds in 2006. Since November 2005, the curriculum has reached over 2,000 educators and community partners in Minnesota, as well as nearly 600 additional individuals in the US and around

A Minnesota Human Rights Education Experience

This is My Home is a new, free,



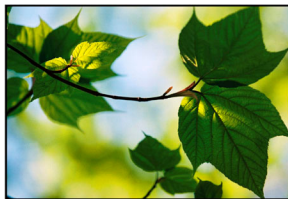
MN educators at a Minneapolis training in July 2006

the world. The Human Rights Center has also distributed over 1,300 *This is My Home* Toolkits.

Additionally, the Center conducted eight training sessions for teachers and community educators during 2006, including a session for Minnesota Human Rights Commissioners in October. At this workshop, Commissioners

created School-Community Action Plans, which were designed to bring city and county Human Rights Commissions together with schools to implement *This is My Home*.

The website for *This is My Home* has expanded as well and continues to offer useful resources for educators, including curriculum units, training session updates, an electronic newsletter, links, and other educational resources. One of the most notable developments on the website was the creation of the *Community Action Planning Tool*. In response to positive feedback on our *Lesson Planning Tool for Teachers*, the Center created a version tailored specifically for the planning and evaluation of community projects. This *Community Action Planning Tool* will help community groups to create and implement more systematic and effective human rights initiatives.✽



Upper Midwest Human Rights Fellowship Program – Who, What, and Where

Aimée Alexander

Fundación Cimas del Ecuador - Quito, Ecuador

Marcia Ashong

Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice - Accra, Ghana

Vanna Chan

End Child Prostitution, Abuse and Trafficking (ECPAT) - Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Obi Chukwu

Comunidade de Resgate Afro - Maua, Brazil

Sarah Drake

St. Cloud Human Rights Office - St. Cloud, Minnesota

Lindsay Eastwood

Immigrant Law Center - St. Paul, Minnesota

Laura Flynn

Midwest Coalition for Human Rights - Minnesota; Nebraska

Alex Haley

Human Rights Council - Geneva, Switzerland

Nicole Leigh Harris

Texas Defender Service - Houston, Texas

Zainab Hassan

Environmental Justice Advocates of Minnesota - Nairobi, Kenya

Ben Kaster

Uganda Rural Community Support Foundation - Masaka, Uganda

Anna Kerner

Amnesty International (AIA) - Sydney, Australia

Upper Midwest Human Rights Fellowship Program

<http://www.umn.edu/humanrts/center/uppermidwest>

The Human Rights Center encourages residents of the Upper Midwest—including students, teachers, lawyers, health professionals, community leaders and others—to undertake practical experiences and internships with local, national, and international human rights organizations. The fellowship placement provides both training for the individual and assistance to the host organization, as well as fosters links between communities in the Upper Midwest and human rights and social justice organizations around the world. Participants return with a stronger commitment to a lifetime of work in human rights and contribute to bringing human rights concerns home to their communities in the Upper Midwest.

In its 17th year, the Fellowship Program supported 28 Fellows as they engaged in human rights and social justice work in Minnesota, the United



2006 Upper Midwest Fellows with Human Rights Center staff

States, and other countries. This year's fellows come from a variety of backgrounds, including undergraduate students, law students, medical students, lawyers, a judge, a recording artist, a writer, and a photographer. They carried out important work on a variety of issues, including asylum and immigration, the death penalty, education, the environment, genocide and reconciliation, health and human rights, homelessness, human

trafficking, racism, torture, and women's rights.

Our Fellows traveled and worked throughout the world in such places as Australia, Brazil, Cambodia, the Czech Republic, Ecuador, Ghana, India, Kenya, Mexico, Nepal, Rwanda, Somalia, Switzerland, Uganda, the United Kingdom, and places within the United States, including Louisiana, Minnesota, and Texas.✽

Erin Martin

Člověk v Tísni (People in Need) - Prague, Czech Republic

Cari O'Brien

International Leadership Institute - Kigali, Rwanda

Jessica Paquin

High Range Plantation Workers Development Society - Kerala, India

Nicholas Petersen

National Housing Federation - London, UK

Elizabeth Powers

FIDA-Kenya - Nairobi, Kenya

Preeti Kaur Rajpal

SAATHII - Punjab, India

Adam Robbins

Center for Victims of Torture - Minneapolis, Minnesota

Elizabeth Royal

ProBono Project - New Orleans, Louisiana

Katherine Sewell

ProBAR - Harlingen, Texas

Jared Shepherd

Human Rights Center - Minneapolis, Minnesota

Andrea Templeton

- Center for Victims of Torture - Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Human Rights Committee - Geneva, Switzerland

Babina Tuladhar

Esther Benjamins Trust - Kathmandu, Nepal

Andrew Turpening

Human Rights Center -

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Jenni Vainik

Hennepin County Domestic Abuse Service Center - Minneapolis, Minnesota

Edward Wilson

Pilgrim Center for Reconciliation - Rwanda

Quito Ziegler

Centro Derechos Laborales Project of the Resource Center of Americas - Minneapolis, Minnesota; Mexico

2006 Events and Milestones

Human Rights Film Series

Through screenings and panel discussions, the Human Rights Center brings experts and community members together to raise awareness, promote discussion, and take action on issues affecting the human rights community in Minnesota, the U.S., and the world. The Human Rights Film Series consists of 4 film screening and panel discussion events during the year.

Our Film Series was very successful this year, including a film on the Darfur crisis in March that attracted well over 200 people. Below are the films we showed in 2006.

Human Rights Speaker Series

As part of its efforts to bring global human rights concerns to the Upper Midwest community, the Human Rights Center organizes the Human Rights Speaker Series. The Speaker Series provides both Upper Midwest and Humphrey Fellows with the opportunity to speak about their human rights work. Upper Midwest Fellows bring their experiences home while Humphrey Fellows bring their knowledge to a new audience in a different part of the world. Our 2006 Human Rights Speaker Series events included:

February 21, 2006: *Anonymously Yours*

Anonymously Yours delves into the world of sex-trafficking in the military state of Burma (Myanmar) through the different experiences of 4 Burmese women.

March 31, 2006: *Darfur Diaries: Message From Home*

Filed in Fall 2004, *Darfur Diaries* recounts the tragic reality of the Darfur genocide crisis through interviews with refugees, members of armed groups, community leaders, and others.

September 21, 2006: *Shipbreakers*

Shipbreakers chronicles the difficult and often brutal conditions of the shipbreaking yards in Alang, India, where workers disassemble massive obsolete cargo ships and face a variety of hazards, including explosions and exposure to toxins.

December 8, 2006: *Crossing Arizona*

Crossing Arizona examines the flash point of the current immigration debate in the United States, along the Arizona/Sonora border. Interviews with activists, migrants, politicians, vigilantes, and others highlight the complexity and sensitivity of the situation.



(Continued from page 1)

focusing on women's and economic rights; and (2) A large increase in the number of users, which has nearly tripled in the last 2 years: from 350,075 users in 2004 to well over 940,000 in 2006.

■ The **Chinese Human Rights Library**, launched in May 2005, continues to attract new users as well. There were very few, if any, Library users from China prior to introduction of Chinese Library. Since then, well over 4,000 users have logged on. Access has been made even easier thanks to the introduction of the PDA format mentioned above. The Chinese Library carries texts in both modern and traditional Chinese characters.

■ The **Russian Human Rights Library** has also experienced a large growth in documentation and usage in 2006. This alcove had a 523% increase in users from 235,000 in 2005 to over 1,464,600 in 2006, as well as the addition of hundreds of important commentaries, legal decisions, and reports in 2006, notably decisions from the European Court of Human Rights pertaining to Russia and Russian-speaking countries.¶

Human Rights Center Sponsored Events

The Human Rights Center organizes, hosts, or co-sponsors many other events throughout the year. Such events for 2006 included:

February 11: *Kurdish Human Rights Film and Civil Society Event*

- Featuring Kurdish human rights advocate Kani Xulam

April 11: *Genocide and Conflict in Darfur*

- Featuring Genocide Intervention Network founder Mark Hanis

April 21: *United Front for Children*

- Conference on Global Efforts to Combat Sexual Trafficking in Travel and Tourism featuring many distinguished speakers
- Organized by the University of Minnesota Human Rights Program

■ October 13: *Songs of Resistance*

Featuring 2005 Upper Midwest Fellow Mark Arneson, speaking on his project to record songs inspired by Guatemala's 36 year civil war, as well as his efforts to develop a curriculum to supplement the recordings.

■ October 17: *Living with the Dead: Reconciliation in Rwanda*

Featuring Reverend Paul Ndahigwa, a leading pastor and activist working for post-genocide reconciliation in

Rwanda (his visit was coordinated by 2006 Upper Midwest Fellow Cari O'Brien).

■ October 24: *The Struggle for Human Rights in Zimbabwe*

Featuring 2006-2007 Humphrey Fellow Arnold Tsunga speaking on the political and social situation in Zimbabwe. Arnold is the executive director of Zimbabwean Lawyers for Human Rights, as well as the recipient of numerous awards for his advocacy work.

April 23: *Invisible Children's Benefit Concert*

- Organized by U of MN student group Raising Awareness for Africa (RAFA)

April 28: *Concert Event: Celebrating the Struggle for Peace and Justice*

- Organized by Women Against Military Madness and Nonviolent Peace Force

October 5: *Guantanamo Bay Teach-In: How Should We Respond?*

- Live web-cast of teach-in organized by Seton Hall Law School

October 12: *Dancing with the Devil: Taking on West Africa's Warlords, Mafia, and Things*

- Featuring Judge David Crane, chief prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone
- Organized by the University of Minnesota's Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs

October 16: *Liechtenstein, the U.S. and the U.N. Human Rights Council*

- Featuring Ambassador Claudia Fritsche of Liechtenstein
- Organized by the Law School Chapter of Amnesty International

November 5: *Bridging: An Interfaith Retreat*

- Organized by the Mall Area Religious Council and the Minnesota Chapter of the Parliament of World Religions

November 15: *Stop Staring, Start Seeing*

- Innovative theater event on homelessness
- Organized by the zAmya Theater Project and the Minnesota Coaches Association

We are honored and proud to welcome Marsha Freeman and the International Women's Rights Action Watch (IWRAP) program as a new and exciting addition to the Human Rights Center. After 20 distinguished years at the Humphrey Institute, Ms. Freeman and IWRAP joined the Center and the Law School community in June 2006.



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Human Rights and Peace Store

www.humanrightsandpeacestore.org

The Human Rights and Peace Store is a joint venture of the Human Rights Center and Growing Communities for Peace. The Store is an important tool for bringing Human Rights and Peace Education into our schools, homes, workplaces, and communities. This unique Store provides easy access to Human Rights and Peace Education books, booklets, curricula, posters, training

guides, multi-media materials, gifts, bookmarks, and other resources. The Human Rights and Peace Store has been busy in 2006, making available over 485 different resources to activists, advocates, educators, lawyers, students, and others. The Store attended over

76 conferences throughout Minnesota, including the annual Education Minnesota teachers' conference in October, which drew hundreds of teachers and community educators from across the state. The Store was also present at Minnesota's annual Human Rights

Day Conference at the beginning of December, which hosts a multitude of human rights advocates and organization representatives.

Among many of the Human Rights and Peace Store's popular items is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) passport-style booklet. In 2006, the Store distributed over 20,000 UDHR booklets nationwide, as well as 1,900 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child booklets.*



Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program



The University of Minnesota's Hubert H. Humphrey (HHH) Fellowship Program is a joint venture between the HHH Institute of Public Affairs, the Human Rights Center, and the Law School. Initiated in 1978, this program brings accomplished mid-career professionals from designated developing nations and emerging democracies to the United States for a year of professional development and related academic study and cultural exchange.

Fellowships are granted competitively to professional candidates with a commitment to public service. The program is sponsored by the US Department of State and administered by the Institute for

International Education. Fellows are assigned to a host university based on their interests and needs.

This year's program includes 160 Fellows from over 90 countries. Fourteen of these Fellows have been assigned to the University of Minnesota, coming from 12 different countries all over the world.*



2006-2007 HHH Fellows & Staff

The Human Rights Center is grateful for the generous support of all of its contributors who have supported its programming over the years. Our 2006 contributors include:

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